

# HOUSTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES



Application to be considered for nomination.

**Mail to:**

Office of Boards and Commissions  
c/o Jenn Char, Director  
901 Bagby, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Houston, TX 77002

(If you have any questions about the application, please contact Kaitlyn Tracy at [Kaitlyn.Tracy@houstontx.gov](mailto:Kaitlyn.Tracy@houstontx.gov))



# About the Houston Commission on Disabilities

## **Purpose**

The mission of the Houston Commission on Disabilities (HCOD) is to advise and make recommendations to the Mayor, City Council, department directors and the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities on issues that pertain to the needs, rights and privileges of people with disabilities. The HCOD is further committed to understanding and monitoring the activities of city government and representing the views and the interests of all citizens with disabilities.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Commissioners**

In order to accomplish the HCOD's mission each commissioner must not only represent the perspective of their respective experiences and opinions but also advocate for all groups that are included under the broad umbrella of disability issues. A well-demonstrated sense of cooperation and willingness to compromise with competing interests is essential.

The City of Houston ethics policy and Texas state statutes regarding open meetings also apply to commissioners. Your rights and privileges as a private citizen are not affected; however, carrying out the role of public appointee requires great care and discretion to avoid actual and perceived conflicts of interest.

The HCOD routinely meets once a month for approximately two hours; however, there will typically be several workgroups or committees devoted to specific issues that reflect the goals and objectives for the year. Commissioners are encouraged to make time to participate in those committees where they can provide expertise and assistance. Other responsibilities may be asked of commissioners such as serving as secretary or parliamentarian for the HCOD, attending special meetings and public forums sponsored by the HCOD or representing the HCOD at other public meetings and events.

Prospective members are encouraged to take the opportunity to attend the HCOD's regularly scheduled meetings to gain a better understanding of issues being discussed and the character of the commission's work. The meetings are currently being held on the second Thursday of each month from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the 1475 West Gray MultiService Center.

Feel free to contact the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities if you have any questions or wish to discuss the work of the Houston Commission on Disabilities in greater detail.



# HCOD Application Form

*Please print clearly or type in the spaces below.*

## *Applicant*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Council District: \_\_\_\_\_ (You may call MOPD for help in determining your district.  
Write N/A if you live outside the city limits of Houston.)

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

*(This signature confirms the willingness of the applicant to be considered for nomination to the HCOD and the understanding that additional information may be requested. Also, the Office of Board and Commissions may perform some vetting and background checks.)*

Submit the completed application form, references, narrative statement and any supporting materials by the preliminary of the **deadline of May 31<sup>st</sup>** to:

Office of Boards and Commissions  
c/o Jenn Char  
901 Bagby, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Houston, TX 77002



# HCOD Application guidelines

## Application Materials

A completed application includes the following:

- Completed application form
- At least one letter of reference with contact information. (Additional references are welcome)
- A narrative statement describing the applicant's activities and how her/his contributions have made positive impact on people with disabilities in Houston. A typical narrative statement will be around 500 words. The length is not as important as how well the content answers the following questions:
  - **How long has the applicant been involved with the issues related to people with disabilities?** *The applicant should be able to demonstrate a depth of experience that brings with it a level of standing as a recognized leader in the disability community in Houston.*
  - **What has been the impact of the work or activities on people with disabilities in Houston?** *The applicant should demonstrate that her/his activities have had a meaningful impact on people with disabilities and can demonstrate a willingness to collaborate with governmental and community-based agencies in a positive and effective manner.*
  - **How will this expertise contribute to the work of the HCOD?** *The applicant should commit to advocating for all disabilities equally and recognize her/his own expertise as being one point of view among many other equally valued perspectives.*
- Optional supporting materials (e.g. resume, newspaper articles, etc)
- We strongly encourage the applicant to attend at least one recent HCOD meeting. Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays of the month. To find information on an upcoming meeting, please go to:  
<http://www.houstontx.gov/disabilities/commission.html>

## **Application Process**

The city code states that the terms of even numbered positions end on July 26 of even number years and odd numbered positions end on July 26 of odd numbered years. Members completing their first term may be reappointed for a second term; however, no commissioner can serve more than two consecutive terms.

Because of these factors the number of open positions can vary from year to year. Based on the number of open positions and the composition of the HCOD at that time, the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) makes a list of recommended nominees taken from the pool of applications and presents these to the Office of Boards and Commission (OBC). OBC completes the final vetting process before choosing which recommendations from MOPD to forward to the Mayor for consideration. The Mayor of Houston has the discretion to either accept or decline any of the recommended nominees. Her appointments to the HCOD are then subject to the approval of City Council. **An effort is made to maintain a balanced composition on the HCOD that reflects the variety of issues encompassed in the community of people with disabilities as well as the demographic make up of Houston.** Nominees are subject to background check. If you are not selected this year, we hope that you will continue to maintain an interest in any possible future opportunities to apply to the HCOD. Applications will be active for one year.

